

Message Text

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63

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12

AID-20 CU-04 IO-12 NEA-10 SY-07 M-03 A-01 RSR-01

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R 121649 Z APR 73

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1499

USINT ALGIERS

C O N F I D E N T I A L TUNIS 2034

ALGIERS FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY NEWSOM

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, TS

SUBJECT: TUNIS CALM ON DAY FEDAYEEN FUNERAL BEIRUT

1. DESPITE RUMORS EARLY IN DAY THAT STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS EXPECTED TUNIS APRIL 12 IN SOLIDARITY FEDAYEEN, BY LATE AFTERNOON NO UNUSUAL ACTIVITY YET APPARENT. GOT OBVIOUSLY EXPECTED SOME TROUBLE. ON ITS OWN INITIATIVE, SURETE PROVIDED EMBASSY WITH SIX ADDITIONAL PLAINCLOTHES SECURITY GUARDS AS PRECAUTIONARY MEASURE, SINCE MIN INTERIOR REPORTS IS STILL HEARING RUMORS. DETACHMENT OF RIOT POLICE (BOP) UNOBTRUSIVELY STATIONED NEAR USIS, PROBABLY FOR SAME REASON.

2. PRESS HAS CARRIED IN FAIRLY LOW KEY PALESTINIAN CHARGES OF U. S. " COMPLICITY" IN ISRAELI RAID IN BEIRUT, BUT IN MOST CASES HAS ALSO CARRIED USG DENIAL.

3. NO MENTION IN PRESS YET OF STATE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN STATEMENT DEPLORING ATTACK, BUT WE HOPE PLACE TOMORROW BASED ON ACCOUNT APPEARING USIA WIRELESS FILE.

4. DURING CONVERSATION TODAY WITH FONOFF SEC GEN MESTIRI
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PRIMARILY REGARDING NEWSOM VISIT, I EXPRESSED REGRET AT THE LOSS OF LIFE IN LEBANON AND SAID US DEPLORES ALL TERRORIST ACTS. MESTIRI REPLIED THAT THIS BALANCED POSITION WAS " IMPORTANT".

5. IN SPEECH TO MEMBERS NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AT PALACE ON APRIL 12, PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA REPORTEDLY CONDEMNED ISRAELI RAID AND DECLARED TUNISIAN SOLIDARITY WITH PALESTINIANS. WE HAVE, HOWEVER, NOT YET SEEN TEXT OF BOURGUIBA STATEMENT.

6. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THERE MAY BE SOME STUDENT UNREST -- POSSIBLY DEMONSTRATIONS -- ON APRIL 16. THIS WOULD BE A RESULT TRIAL SIXTEEN STUDENTS ANNOUNCED FOR THAT DAY, CHARGED WITH PARTICIPATING IN SPREADING " SUBVERSIVE MATERIAL". GOT'S SECURITY FORCES UNDOUBTEDLY AWARE OF POSSIBILITY, AND WOULD ACT QUICKLY TO SUPPRESS DEMONSTRATIONS IF THEY DEVELOP.

7. NEWSOM VISIT TO TUNISIA, FOLLOWING MOROCCO AND ALGERIA, NOW REPORTED IN TUNISIAN PRESS.
SEELYE

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

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30 JUN 2005

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